In this illustration, the first son receives slightly over 60% of the land, ignoring type and grade within type. There was general agreement in all villages that the grade of land within each classification (grades 1 to 4 in dry crop land, for example) had little significance in inheritance matters. The grade is more important for tax purposes.

The example also illustrates two other principles: the natural desire to keep contiguous or close in land within the main family, using inconvenient or far off land where possible for house sites for branch families, or for arable land for second and other sons. In this illustration, the shares of the second and of the third sons could be equalized by subdividing plot #6, although its small area would not make it worth while, as 75 tsubo is a very low average size for dry crop land.

Another practice, noted in Hanashiro and in Matsuda, is that the first son receives everything on the retirement of the father. This may be contrasted with a situation in which the father divides the property before younger sons marry and establish branch families. In such cases, the father might take the income from part of the property. But the more general practice is for the father to give all to the first son. Fathers may also make a will. When the first son receives all, it is the custom for him to hold property which the younger sons will need in establishing their branch families. It is in cases where the first son is given full disposition of the property that quarrels are most likely to occur, for much depends on the generosity and sense of fairness of the elder brother.[3]

In Hanashiro and Minatogawa, it is important that younger brothers receive genya land. Genya is often translated as wild land. In Japan the term is usually used to describe treeless, waste, hilly, rocky, or rolling land unsuitable for cultivation. In Okinawa, the genya land may be in the center of a rice field; it may be a rocky mound with cultivation around it. It may be land in the mountains. It is almost invariably in grass (miscanthus) with an occasional cycad or scrub pine. It is not owned in large tracts. In Hanashiro, the largest single parcel is 4564 tsubo (3.77 acres), in Minatogawa 1333 (tsubo) (1.9 acres), and in Matsuda 6398 tsubo (5.28 acres), but these are far above the average. In Hanashiro it is important because grass is constantly needed for thatched roofs and other uses. The importance of genya and its grass was well illustrated in Minatogawa after the typhoon, Ruth, of October 13-14, 1951. These villagers own little land and many have no genya. They were obliged to buy the grass to replace the roofs of many of the frailer houses which had been partially or completely destroyed by the typhoon. Genya is also used for family tombs. In Hanashiro, the genya

[Text continues TOP of P. 133--Analyst]

3) The problem can be appreciated by analyzing the acreage areas of each classification of land and the grades within it, bearing in mind that the average farmer has hatake, genya, and often rice paddies. These statistics will be given in the following chapter.

311
[242] Land appraisal made by people with long experience with the capabilities of their soils under traditional methods of farming, fertilization, and land reclamation is very old in the culture. This in itself is a very significant fact about the culture aside from the obvious technical utility of a land classification system. [556] Land classification is important as a tangible indication of wealth as appraised by representatives of the village. This classification [651] is the basis of taxation of land. A grade two rice paddy pays a lower tax than a grade one. The system of land classification also [433] provides a basis for estimating probable yields.

[632] Township officials are responsible for land classification on a township basis, but each village does its own. In Oushichan township (Hanashiro and Hinatogawa) the elected mayor and his appointed subordinates and local farmers who know the land well have set up the system based on classes and grades of land. In Ginoza-son, the mayor performs a similar function. Since each village has its land classification, a table of correspondences makes possible the comparison of equivalent grades. A composite system for the township can then be made. Grade three rice land in Matsuda, for example, may be equivalent to grade two rice land in Ginoza village. By listing all these together, a village wide classification is made.

The main classifications (tōkyū) of land found in all communities are: (1) Rice lands, (ta, tambo), (2) dry crop land (hatake). It is very difficult to translate the word hatake. So far the expression dry crop land has been used. This land may be contrasted with the wet rice fields; it is dry farming land, usually on rolling slopes or upland. It is land used for cultivation of domestic plants except rice and one or two other minor crops. Rice and dry crop land are the two main classes. (3) Genya land. This word is also difficult to translate. It is variously rendered as wild or waste land, but it is neither wild nor wasteland in an economic sense. It is best described negatively as land not suited for cultivation. Despite its low value, it is important land for its production of grass, reeds, firewood and plant shoots for domestic animals. It is vital in land [185] conservation. The genya land, sometimes on steep or gentle mountain slopes, sometimes cropping out in the midst of cultivated fields or rice paddies, with its dense growth of grass, its occasional pine tree or cycad effectively binds the soil and prevents disastrous run off and flash floods. Around the village of Hanashiro, genya land is rocky and most of its vegetation consists of grass with some shrubs. Before the war, this genya land had more pine and cycads than at present, and the disappearance of the cycad and pine furnished greater opportunity for the omnipresent miscanthus, though there are occasional regrowths of the pine. In Matsuda, the genya land often is indistinguishable from the forest. But the trees are less dense and the privately owned genya is interspersed with the small cultivated paddies and fields. (4) House sites (yashiki, takuchi). There are usually two classes: the first class site is convenient and on a main road or lane; the second class is inconvenient, a rear house, or one

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

311 243 be lowered. If the rainfall is unusually low, the estimated yields may even be cut in half. Grade differences are also shown by the Oushichan tax table on rice land:

Class	Rate in Yen (per tsubo)
1	37
2	34
3	31
4	28
5	25
6	22
7	19

● [651]

311 The grading of dry crop land is not so simple because various crops can be grown and there are difficulties in making equivalences of yields. The grading is more subjective and vague, with gradations based on the judgment of the land committee. It might seem that the grades of dry crop land based on subjective judgment would be difficult to agree upon. This is not the case. Farmers who have lived in the village all their lives, and who as children remembered the experience of their fathers, know their own and their neighbors' land well. Representatives from the village who suggest the grades are chosen by the farmers for their honesty, skill in agriculture, and knowledge of the land.

311 134 133 Depth of the soil, flatness, degree of stoniness and accessibility are the most important criteria. The first three of these follow naturally from conditions widespread in Okinawa. There often is very little topsoil. One can observe cuts in roads or sharp declivities which show soils only an inch or two deep before meeting the consolidated or unconsolidated rock below. The hilly and mountainous nature of the island enforces cultivation on slopes, summits, and rolling hills. Stoniness, whether large boulders or small pebbles or both is common. One of the occupations of the old in Minatogawa and Nagamo is to convert stony to arable land by tediously picking up the stones and throwing them into piles for subsequent sale in road building. But often the boulders are so large that cultivation must curve around them. These conditions can be seen to good advantage in Nagamo. In Wanashiro, the soils are flatter, less stony, and deeper. Matsuda has wide areas of poor shallow and stony soils. [887] First class hatake land, then, is flat, deep, with few or no stones, [241] and suitable either for sugar or the sweet potato and the various common vegetables.

311 With this standard of first class hatake land, the other grades are judged, mostly by inspection and through consultation and agreement by the committee. In the Oushichan township, there are ten such grades of hatake land, the tenth grade being so poor that it is virtually genya land. In dry crop land, probably the most important

single criterion is nearness, providing the land has possibilities. Good land, unless of substantial area, if remote and far from roads, is very time consuming and inconvenient. 311

Genya land in the Oushichan area has two grades. The criterion here is the presence of grass and small shrubs that can be used for firewood. Grade two genya grows little or nothing either because of the large boulders or because it has too many small stones or unconsolidated rock with little vegetation. If it were not for stones or such topographical factors as steepness or ruggedness, some genya land could be classified as poor grade dry crop land. There are, as in rice land, tax differentials according to grade of hatake and genya land: [824] [134] [133]

Grade	Dry Crop Land Tax in Yen	Wild Land (Genya) Tax in Yen
1	13	2
2	12	1.80
3	11	
4	10	
5	9	
6	8	
7	7	
8	6	
9	5	
10	4	

[651]

In Ginoza-son, the land classification system is substantially the same. There are six different grades of land classified according to yield in go per tsubo. (A go is 1/1000 of a koku, a tsubo about 4 square yards). [804]

Grade	Yield	Remarks
1	5	Two annual plantings.
2	4	Two annual plantings.
3	3	Dependent entirely on amount of estimated rainfall.
4	2	
5	1.5	
6	1.0	Mountain paddy, very uncertain, depending on rainfall; occasionally two crops a year are possible.

[433] [241]

Dry crop land is judged by criteria similar to those in Oushichan-son. Grade 1 is good soil and convenient to water with good yields as shown by experience. Grades 2 and 3 are convenient to water, but soils are of lesser quality. The classification is also based on experience. Grade 4 is in low places, generally narrow ravines between steep wooded slopes. Grades 5 and 6 have little or no water, are stony, and inconvenient. [134] [312] [133]

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

311 Land classification in Okinawa proceeds from the village to the township and then to the whole island. Each class of land in a village has its own grade. By combining these grades a township classification is made. This is done first by village committees determining the grades for each of their classes of land, and then by setting up a table of equivalences after discussion by the committee representing the whole township. Matsuda's first grade dry crop land might be considered by the land classification committee to be equal in quality to Ginoza village's second class land. While there might be only six classifications for any one village, when all these are combined, there may be ten grades for the township. This is shown by the table of correspondences for Matsuda and neighboring villages in Ginoza-son, as of November 1951.

In this illustration, Matsuda's first class rice land is considered second grade on a township wide basis; its sixth grade dry crop land is grade nine, and its first and second class houses are by comparison, grades three and four in the whole township.

311 With minor variations, the procedures in classifying land are
623 the same in both townships. Each village makes the classification of
632 its own land. This is done by five villagers, chosen by the people for their knowledge and integrity. In Oushichan township, village experts are designated to serve on the township committee.[8] Seven men from the villages are joined by the mayor (sonchō), the vice-mayor (joyaku), the trade and industry section head, the agricultural section head of the township office, a total of eleven men, who then determine the township classifications. These committees make inspections of
[574] doubtful cases, often after working hours. The field trips usually end up with a sake party.

In Ginoza-son essentially the same procedures are followed. Each village sends representatives, the number being determined by the area of the village. In late 1951, this village-wide committee had 24 members with the township mayor as chairman. Each village prepares its own land classification map. The local classifications, later combined to make a township-wide classification, have the advantage of limiting the range of grades in a small area and of comparing parcels close together.

Occasionally the grade of a plot is changed to correct an error or to make it consistent with an improvement. A new road may make a plot of land more accessible and thus change its grade.

311 In all the villages studied, land classification was important
651 for the same reasons: for tax purposes, for estimating future produc-
433 tion, and for the individual farmer, a means of demonstrating tangible
556 wealth.

8 One representative each is chosen from the villages of Oushichan, Aragusuku, Koshihara, and Nakaza villages, one from Oton and Hanashiro combined, one from Asato and Yoza combined, and one from Hinatogawa-ikku and Hinatogawa-niku combined.

fuel. The usual practice here too is to clear cut up a steep hill or mountain, the lower and more convenient the spot, the more efficient the clearcutting. Weeds, shrubs, grasses, and the Yambaru bamboo have quickly taken the place of the trees. The man induced climax vegetation is grass and shrub.

Forest destruction in Okinawa does not seem to have reached the alarming proportions observed in Japan.[6] The destruction of the war increased the demand for lumber and firewood. This demand accelerated the dangerous practices and led to widespread waste.[7] Fortunately, if Matsuda is a good example, the roads were poor and underdeveloped, and the mills small. There was some brake on uncontrolled deforestation.

In the accompanying photograph of the Matsuda forest area, there was access to the summit and the trees there were cut down. For some reason, probably the steepness of the mountain side, the pine and shii on the slopes were not cut. The result was that tall stands of dwarf bamboo took over the spaces on the summit left by the trees, while the trees continued to grow on the mountain sides.

Since the forest is owned by the village, any resident may cut trees for his own use. This custom has few dangers because it is a large forest with a small population in the environs. The cutting is scattered. The villager selects the tree with the consent of the village official in charge of forest control, cuts it and takes it to his courtyard. There is a charge of Y1 for each large tree, or Y1 for five small trees. This money goes to the village office. Villagers' personal needs are a small drain on the forest resource.

The village government also sells wood. In lulls in farming, or when the farmer needs some cash, he may cut trees for the village. Wood cutting for lumber is a year round activity. September to December is the season for cutting firewood. There are two common practices in commercial dealings with wood and lumber. For cutting and gathering firewood, the village office pays Y5 a bundle, Y4 goes to the person cutting the wood, and Y1 to the village office, 60% of which it retains and 40% going to the township office.

Cutting and gathering wood is by no means an easy task. The walk to the forest may take an hour one way, though there may be truck transportation part way. The trees must be cut, the wood chopped up and made into the familiar bundles tied with a stout rush (often the i) and carried back or put in a central location to be picked up later. This marketing of wood on an individual basis is casual and intermittent. More continuous and larger scale exploitation takes place when the village office sells a certain area for cutting. The village takes 60%, the township 40% of the proceeds.

6 Ibid, 285-87. [Text continues on p. 232.--Analyst]
7 Okinawan forests, as cited, 2-3, 5-8.

60% of the proceeds. The trees thus sold are all cut down. After clearcutting, the area is left to natural reseeding. About twenty years hence, the clearing will again be sufficiently forested to permit repetition of the same procedure. This follows an established Japanese pre-war practice. This was known as the five year period share (gonenkanbun). The forest is divided into subdivisions, each 110 chō in area. (A chō is 2.45 acres). These 110 chō plots are in turn subdivided into five parcels of twenty-two chō each. Each year one of these five subdivisions may be cleared.

Throughout the forest, divided up into these plots, there may be a five year cycle of cutting, but not all the plots are available every year. If this were so, the forest could be cut over in five years. The system is planned so that there will always be parcels being cleared, those in various stages of regrowth, and mature stands. During and after the war, this practice broke down in favor of uncontrolled cutting.

If a family has little cash, a villager may pay his taxes in part by cutting wood. The village office pays Y4 for a bundle of firewood (late 1951), Y2 going to the villager as a cash payment, and Y2 being applied to his taxes for the year.

The farmer makes frequent excursions to the mountains to obtain firewood or poles to make improvements in the compound, such as repairing a tool or food shed. Men do this work, especially when the distances are far, but the participation of women is by no means exceptional. Along the roads of northern Okinawa, one can frequently see old women walking down from the mountains carrying bundles of firewood on heavy poles. Much of the wood is hand carried from the mountains; if the farmer has a horse and cart or a truck, the wood is carried to a convenient road for loading and transport.

Charcoal is manufactured in the forest area. In Okinawa charcoal has many uses, mainly for heating and cooking, and for charcoal sticks (senko). Lumps of charcoal are placed in braziers and the sticks are used as touchwood in place of matches and in ceremonial and religious observances. Charcoal containers (tangu) are often constructed on the spot. These are round or box-shaped and made out of the dwarf bamboo.

Charcoal kilns are privately owned. They are of the simplest sort. The kiln may be covered with a rude housing, built up by poles and a thatch roof. A mound of large boulders and dirt is built with an opening on the dirt floor running the length of the firing area. Poles which have been stripped and cut in various lengths, from five to nine feet, are shoved in the opening and moved forward as they burn. The smoke comes out the back.

Forest maintenance and improvement is, in part, a result of community endeavor. With some exceptions, each person in the village from 16 to 60 participates one day a year in forest improvement (sōrin).[8] The participants are boys past school age, unmarried girls, and all men up to the age of 60. These people work without personal remunera-

[8] The usual meaning of sōrin is afforestation or reforestation. In Matsuda it is used in the sense of care and improvement of the forest.

436 1175 no native money and used the Japanese cash, and that the Japanese did not permit a native coinage.[2]

436 Up to the war, only bills of low denominations circulated in the villages. In Minatogawa, an old lady, now about 73, said that before the war she had never seen a Y100 note, which at that time was worth slightly over US$25. But since the 19th century, new conditions have pried the farmer loose from barter and self-sufficiency. 434 511 There is little to warrant a belief that rural villages are self-sufficient. The most elementary obligations, such as sending one's children to school, require cash. An average rural family of five may require from Y40-60,000 a year.

[574] Cash outlays include: (1) Entertainment, including the purchase of sake. Entertainment is an integral part of the culture and cannot be dismissed as a luxury. (2) Clothing. (3) Fertilizer. (4) Tobacco. [388] (5) Soap. No soap is made in the home. American soap flakes are highly prized, but generally are not purchased because of the cost. (6) Hair cutting. (7) Food and food supplements, such as noodles [262] and vermicelli types of paste, cooking oils, salt, soy sauce, meat, fish, seaweed (kombu), rice, if not grown and purchases from the import store. (8) Fuel, charcoal, charcoal sticks. (9) Transportation for business or pleasure. (10) Newspapers. Many subscriptions are cancelled when the price goes up. [204] (11) Tools and tool repairs, but maintenance is small after the original investment. (12) School books and [872] contributions to schools for purchasing special items. (13) Medicines and mid-wives' fees. (14) Occasional purchases of lumber, stone, or ● [651] tile. (15) Taxes.

434 In the farming areas, sugar and pigs are the only significant sources of cash income. Sweet potatoes, rice, eggs, and soy beans may be sold, but the amounts are either too small or the selling price too low to provide substantial amounts of cash. Occasionally younger sons may have jobs which bring in money, and a farmer or his sons may have a horse cart for hire.

In Minatogawa, cash outlays, in addition to the items already mentioned, are required for nets, gasoline, and oil. Cash comes from sales of fish, pigs, and stone. The lack of rice, an insufficient [5] sweet potato crop for year round needs, imports of firewood from the north and the occasional need to purchase grasses for thatch make this community more dependent on cash than the agricultural community.

42 8 The economic problem of the fisherman is also different from that of the farmer. Both the farmer and the fisherman must pay cash for medicines, fertiliser, alcoholic drinks, clothing, various special but traditional articles of the diet, taxes, tools, and supplies. The farmer, however, can produce much of his food. He can exist on sweet potatoes, bean curd, and bean paste soup, and if need be may spend little money on food. The fisherman cannot exist on fish alone. Fishermen without fields must depend on cash earnings to buy the

2 Hawks, Perry's expediti s to Japan, Vol. I, 160, 220-21. Chamberlain, The Luchu islands and their inhabitants, Geo. Journal 5 (1895), 313.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Their acts are enforced in each of the villages by the headman. 632

The village headman (kuchō) is an intermediary between the people and the township government. He listens to complaints from his people, carries them to the township government for a hearing, and has supervision over official community projects and activities. The headman, like the mayor, is a busy, hardworking man. His pay, insufficient to live on, is midway between a salary and an honorarium. The headman of Hanashiro, for example, received ¥720 per month, Hinatogawa ¥950, and Matsuda ¥2000 a month.[5] The headman usually has a paid clerk (shoki) who works full time and may receive more pay than the headman. The clerk compiles reports of the village population, assists the headman at meetings, and is a general administrative assistant. 622 622 [965] [624]

The village headman is elected for a period of one year. There is no campaigning. The election generally is preceded by discussions among the heads of households, village elders, the young men's association and the women's association. These discussions reveal the candidates who are able to do the work and have the leisure and the money to undertake the responsibility. [66]

A village headman usually leads a harried life. Most of them regard their term as a duty to be discharged rather than a beginning of a career in office holding. A former village headman of Hanashiro said that, in addition to the formal meetings he attended at the township office, he had to visit the village office at least 15 times a month on some village problem, such as taxes, health and sanitation, or individual complaints. The village headman of Hinatogawa had a constant succession of problems: reports on overdue fishermen, getting water pipe lines from the mountains to the water tank repaired, taking charge of typhoon damage repair, and trying to have small improvements made in the village. The headman is caught between the township officials who need tax money and the villagers who complain that they have so little money with which to pay them. In Matsuda, there was the same multiplication of problems involving taxes, need for extra school supplies or repairs, and road maintenance. [651]

Village headmen belong to no special age group. In one township, they ranged in age from 30 to 52. Age is not a decisive factor in their selection, but reputation, literacy, and friendliness are. Though there is a change in administration each year, the incumbent headman stays on one month after the close of his term until the new one has become accustomed to his duties. In some villages, the clerk is elected at the same time as the village headman. [624]

The village headman does not have, nor does he desire, complete responsibility for administering the village. Two groups are available for advice. The headman will not make decisions on important non-routine matters without consulting them. The first of these, the village council 623

5 For comparative purposes, the minimum wage for young Okinawan girls employed as maids for US personnel was about ¥100 ($9.17) per month. [465]

of the permanent Tairan families fish; the majority of the fishermen are migrants from the surrounding islands who come for a season, leaving their families behind. A few families have moved in permanently. The fishermen supply Taira, but most of the catch is peddled in the Nago market by the fishermen's wives. Some of the more enterprising and mercantile-minded women in the village buy up fish and peddle it for a profit.

Two or three times a year, during February or March, large fishing boats from Henza Island land in Taira with whale meat. All the able women look forward to making extra cash at this time, for whale meat is considered a delicacy in homes where meat is rare. Blubber is eaten and used as frying fat. The distribution of whale meat is arranged by one village woman whose fishermen relatives from Henza supply it in response to her request. She acts as agent, distributing the meat to the women on consignment.

LUMBERING

The main source of immediate cash for most families is firewood. Forest land in the mountains is owned by the township and the village, except for some woods near the fields, which are personal property. The township permits the village to exploit a certain region surrounding the community in return for payment of a forest tax. This tax is levied on firewood bundles or on lumber sold by villagers. Everyone in the village is free to cut wood in the designated area in any amount he desires. This, however, does not imply that unlimited cutting is possible, for resources have been utilized so heavily that most forests near the village are almost cleaned out, and it has become increasingly difficult to find wood. Reforestation has only recently been introduced on a serious scale. Often villagers are found trespassing on land owned by the central Ryukyan government in order to cut from the less depleted forests there. Government officials are sympathetic to the villagers' plight, and they tend to dispose of such transgressions with a stern warning.

Men and women, and during vactions, some children over 12 years, go to the forest. Most people prefer to walk and work in small groups. To reach a place high up in the hills, they may have to hike almost a mile from the center of Taira. The steep, narrow paths made by woodcutters traverse the mountains. Following the approach trails during the day, one can hear voices and the sawing of wood from many directions. All lumber people carry a short handsaw and a heavy bush knife

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

the school. Classes are held from 9 o'clock until noon with one recess. After an hour for lunch, lessons resume for all grades above first. Classes, sports, and cleanup end between 2 and 3:30 in the afternoon, the highest grades staying the longest. 872

All grades receive instruction in Japanese writing and reading, arithmetic, science, music, and drawing. Social science is introduced in the second grade. Since each class has one teacher for all subjects, shifts from one to the next subject may come in the middle of an hour. The greatest amount of time is spent in teaching Japanese reading and writing. At first grade level the simplified syllabary is taught, followed in the second grade by another syllabary and the first Chinese characters. [871 177 191]

Parents maintain contact with the school through a Parent-Teachers Association, called by the American abbreviation, PTA. Every household is a member. Those with children of school age are regular members who pay 15 yen (12 cents) a month; others are supposed to pay 5 yen but have become so delinquent that their fees have been dropped. The actual PTA work is done by a committee from each village, including the headman and the heads of the Women's and Young People's Associations. The main purpose of the PTA is to support the school in some of its maintenance problems. Attendance of all parents at a general meeting occurs only once a year when elections of officers take place and the PTA budget is discussed and approved. 875 575

The principals of both schools are represented in township affairs and in the associations of their own community. Contact between village leaders and school representatives is therefore frequent. Since education taxes are the single largest tax item which villagers pay (80% of the total tax), this representation of the principals is a necessary but burdensome duty for them. 875 621 [651]

Township education taxes are supplemented by government subsidies. School taxes are paid by all households according to their income and average about 515 yen ($1.30) yearly. Since 1952, government orders require education taxes to be levied separately from other taxes so that people are aware of the amount destined for education; tax collection is one of the main problems in village administration, and school principals are sometimes called on to explain the need for such taxation and the obligations of individuals to carry their share of the burden. 871 658 651

The administration of funds and general school matters are the responsibility of an official in the township finance department. During 1954–1955, 310,344 yen ($2586) were collected by the township in education taxes. The government subsidy amounted to 3,716,397 yen [632]

871 ($30,970) for the four schools in the township. The largest expenses
658 are salaries, construction, and maintenance. Money is also provided for
[651] conferences, supplies, and other items on the school budget. The PTA budget serves to supplement the regular school appropriations, which are always insufficient to cover all expenses.

The concern with educational matters is carried into the community in another way. Taira has established a so-called scholarship incentive fund for which money is contributed by the village store and some prominent Taira businessmen from the city, such as the former mayor. This fund is used to give awards, usually notebooks or pencils, to all students, double amounts to those with outstanding attendance records. Honor students are not singled out. The largest part of the fund is used as financial help to families with one or more high school students and to widows with schoolchildren who have no other breadwinner in their family. This is another example of direct support of education by the community.

871 As with all matters concerning village life, participation of parents in school affairs and an interest in the school's goals and problems depend greatly on the educational and economic background of individual families. For this reason, scholastic standing of children is frequently a reflection of the interest and encouragement they receive at home. Incentive is therefore to some extent passed on from successful parents to their children, and if one can speak of a succession in leadership, it is partly determined by this instruction.

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Chapter 11

Recreation

517 No one can remain in the village of Taira for long without recognizing that its people have a happy faculty for enjoying themselves during those periods which they can spare from their work. The daily routine is broken by a good number of rests and holidays, and the full and unburdened indulgence in social activities at such times, without any ap-

746 one case investigated, the village secretary and most of the village people thought that a certain old-repatriate should be on relief, if only to receive money to obtain the tobacco he could not buy. The 'son' office was not told about his elder brother's second son, who lives in Osaka. Nor was any check made on the untrue report that he was ill, for no medical proof or witnesses are necessary. Upon moving from his sister-in-law's house to a grass shack next door, he was placed upon the relief list to receive the monthly maximum of ¥250 (about $2.08).

746 [77] The 'son' office also supervises the distribution to persons on relief of clothes supplied by the American relief agency RIVAC (Ryukyu Islands Voluntary Agencies Committee). Each person receives free two or three useful items upon signing for their receipt with his chop. These are greatly appreciated by the recipients.

621 427 Rentals of Village-Owned Land Each village generally owns some grassland, some forest land, and a pond or two. These they rent out to the highest bidder. The 'genya' or grassland is rented anew each year, and the person may keep it in grass, or may convert it to dry crop land ('hatake'). The only requirement is that he must not let the grass grow long and shade the nearby crops. The plot owned by Tomoyose village used to be the village horse-powered sugar mill before the better one was built before the war.

[228] [423] Ponds owned by the village are rented out to the highest bidder in a secret bid, for a period of two years. The renter uses the pond to raise carp. Forest land, I was told, is not supposed to be owned by the village, so it is recorded in the land register as the property of a prominent private individual.

651 [632] Taxes The Okinawan farmer is subject to a great number of official taxes. The following is a list of the fifteen 'sonzei', or township taxes, of Kanegusuku-son. Legally these are called district taxes, or 'chihō-zei'.

Tax Name	Translation
Sonmin-zei	Township Citizens' Tax (on all persons who are able to work, except students)
Tochi-zei	Land Tax
Fudōsan Shutoku zei	Real Estate Acquisition Tax
Kaoku-zei	House (or Building) Tax
Kōgyō-zei	Tax for Industry (eg: 'sake' factory)
Gyubasha-zei	Tax for Horsecart or Oxcart
Jidōsha-zei	Auto, Bus and Jitney Tax (Motor Vehicle Tax)
Rajio-zei	Radio Tax
Denchū-zei	Electric Pole Tax
Tochiku-zei	Slaughter Tax
Chikken-zei	Dog Tax
Senpaku-zei	Boat Tax
Jitensha-zei	Bicycle Tax
Denwa-zei	Telephone Tax
Jigyō-zei	Business Tax

In addition to the above, a 'kenkyū-hi' (study charge) is collected to supplement the pay of the school teachers. The most important of the above taxes are the 'sonmin-zei', the 'tochi-zei', and the 'kaoku-zei'. In Kochinda-son there was instituted for the first time in 1953 an Education Tax, or 'kyōiku-zei'. In most cases this amount was about 10% larger than the 'sonmin-zei' amount. All Nanahan taxes have constantly risen during the years 1951, 1952 and 1953. In part this may reflect the rising value of the land, especially that converted into paddies. But it is also in part a reflection of the rising cost of government. The average of all taxes per household in Kochinda-son for 1952 was ¥486; the tax amount per individual was ¥104.[1] 651

Payments to Officials From the taxes paid by the 'son' citizens come the salaries of the village mayors and the salaries of those employed at the 'son' office. In addition, the 'son' pays for the transportation costs of township assemblymen ('son-giin') so that they may attend meetings held at the village office. The following is a list of the functions of persons working at the Kochinda-son office in 1954: 632

Title	Translation
Sonchō	Township Mayor
Joyaku	Assistant Mayor
Shūnyū-yaku	Treasurer
Keizai-shunin	Head of the Economic Department
Keizaika-in (2)	Member of the Economic Department (2 persons)
Sōmuka-shunin	Head of the General Affairs Dept.
Sōmuka-in	Member of General Affairs Dept. (doubles as Secretary to the Mayor)
Tōkei-shokuin	Statistics Clerk
Kōseki-chōsain	Census Registry Inquiry Clerk
Koseki-seibi-in (2)	Census Registry Arrangement Clerks (2)
Tochi-gakari	Persons in Charge of Land Affairs
Zaimuka-shunin	Head of the Financial Department
Zaimuka-in	Member of the Financial Department
Engojimu-in	Person in Charge of Relief and Aid
Shakai-jigyo-in	Person in Charge of Social Affairs
Shakai-fukushi-shi	Public Welfare Officer
Kōmuka-in	Person in Charge of Industrial Dept.
Nōgyō-kairyō-fukyū-in	Person in Charge of Agricultural Improvement and Diffusion
Shitei	Servant

On the village level there are other taxes that never enter into the official tax figures. Each 'hanchō', or ward head, collects in Tomoyose monthly about 10% of the year's estimated 'sonmin-zei'. This, however, is not that tax, but is used for the expenses of the village. Much of it goes to pay the expenses of the village clerk. 651 621

Levies In addition to the levy mentioned above, designed to supplement the low salaries of school teachers, there are irregular levies made for special occasions. One very informal levy observed during my stay was a collection of money for the reversion movement. Others include levies upon 651

[1] Ryūkyū tōkei hōkoku, op. cit., p. 84.

Others include levies upon
651 organizations and families to support the athletic meets, or 'undōkwai',
[526] which are such a popular part of life in Okinawa.

575 Before the war the women's group ('fujinkai') and the young people's
178 group ('seinendan') levied a certain amount of soybeans against each member,
and when they were delivered the sale brought in money to finance their ac-
[524] tivities. These organizations also made up special meals for local athletic
526 favorites while they were in training, and provided a feast for them at the
651 end of the contests. Today the 'undōkwai' is on more of a monetary basis,
632 and there is a levy called the 'undōkwai no keihi'. In October of 1953, the
cost of the grand athletic meeting held in Naha was divided among the 'son'
according to the number of champions sent to the contest. Kochinda-son was
top grade in Shimajiri, and Tomoyose was a middle-grade village within
Kochinda-son. This grade was judged by the amount of arable land, its yield,
and the population. Within the village, households in turn are assessed by
three grades, according to their income tax records. These three grades
were "minimum," under ¥20; "middle", ¥20-50; and "maximum", ¥50-54.

621 Local Philanthropy From time to time the leading household heads are called
741 upon to donate money for improvement of village facili-
ties. Names of contributors and amounts given are written upon a wooden
plaque and hung in the village meeting house. The building of this meeting
house itself involved the gathering of such a fund, to which Nanahan people
gave a total of ¥1,450. Later a request for funds to buy a funeral stretcher
brought ¥390 from the household heads, and a road repair campaign netted
¥1,550 from Nanahan.

Somewhat the reverse of the above occurred after the Russo-Japanese
war when a particularly handsome soldier from the neighboring village came
back from the front. All the leading 'geisha' in Naha had long had the habit
of asking him to come to their establishments without charge. His return
brought such joy to their hearts that they got together a sum of money and
bought him a large plot of land near Nanahan.

52 Prizes at Contests From the time a youngster enters school and participates
in his first contest to the time when he shows an animal
at his last village or 'son' festival before retiring, all winners look for-
ward to some sort of prize to mark the occasion. In school the prizes are
generally beautifully handwritten scrolls, but as one gets older the prizes
assume the form of wooden trays and articles of practical use in the home.

858 Sale of Children When the SIRI team first arrived on Okinawa and mentioned
432 that we were interested in finding if the Okinawans still
[183] practiced the sale of children, sophisticated respondents feigned indignation.
Later on, as we were able to gain rapport in the countryside, a number of such
instances were forthcoming.

In Tomoyose a man got into debt over an effort to make a fortune in
sugar along about 1910. He was so heavily in debt to village people that he
was socially unable to live in the community, and moved to Itoman. There he
sold his son to a fisherman. The son is now a grown man with an Okinawan wife
and a mistress from Amami. His business is still fishing, although he also
owns a truck.

632 The Land Affairs Department maintains the land ownership records
423 ('tochi daichō') and issues certificates of land title ('chiken'). The head
[651] of this department ('tochijimuchō' or 'tochi gakari') together with the village mayor ('kuchō') and his council assesses land values for tax purposes.

632 The Departments of Public Welfare and Social Affairs are concerned
744 with matters relating to relief, health, sanitation, etc. The functions of these overlap somewhat with those of the police and the Naha Health Center. One day each month a nurse from the Health Center is at the township office giving shots to children. Once a month there is a sanitation inspection of all the villages within the 'son'; the emphasis shifts each month---thus, one month it may be for mosquito control and the next it may be extermination of flies. Relief measures are also handled from these departments.

632 A 'son' assembly ('senkai' or 'songikai') functions as the legislative
178 branch of 'son' government; it is empowered to enact local ordinances, approve the mayor's selection of employees for the village office, and make local tax levies. In Kanegusuku-son each of the eight villages selects two representatives ('sonkaigiin') for the assembly, and the term of office is four years. Before the end of the war this body was an appointive one selected by the mayors of the villages ('kuchō'); in turn the assembly appointed the township mayor. The bulk of the population had no voice in local government; today, however, both the mayor and the assembly stand for election. In all elections
[666] for municipal and central government offices universal suffrage now obtains; all those twenty and above are entitled to vote.

632 The meetings of the 'son' assembly are too infrequent to provide ef-
622 fective representation at all times for the people. Regular contact between the people and the township office is maintained by frequent meetings of all the village mayors ('kuchō') with the township mayor ('sonchō'). This group, known as 'kuchōkai' (village mayors' assembly), meets three times each month generally on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth, though in times of emergency or pressing business it may meet oftener. Problems of general concern to the villages are discussed. These meetings enable the township mayor to keep in touch with the problems of the villages and what the people are thinking; they also provide the opportunity to inform and instruct the village mayors regarding directives or projects to be carried out in the villages.

632 One of the chief functions of the township government is to collect
651 taxes for the central government and for its own needs. The following township taxes ('senzei', or in legal terminology, 'chihōzei') are those levied by Kanegusuku-son:

senmin-zei	Villagers' Tax. This is a head tax on all persons who are able to work between the ages of 17 and 60 excluding students, blind, sick, and crippled persons.
tochi-zei	Land Tax. For details see chapter on Land Tenure.
fudōsan shutoku-zei	Real Estate Acquisition Tax.
kaoku-zei	House or Building Tax.

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kōgyō-zei	Industry Tax.
gyūbasha-zei	Horsecart or Oxcart Tax.
jidōsha-zei	Automotive Vehicle Tax (all types).
rajio-zei	Radio Tax.
denchū-zei	Electric Pole Tax.
tochi [illegible]-zei	Slaughter Tax.
chikken-zei	Dog Tax.
senpaku-zei	Boat Tax.
jitensha-zei	Bicycle Tax.
denwa-zei	Telephone Tax.
jigyō-zei	Business Tax
kenkyu-hi	Study Fee. This is assessed on the basis of land holding, and it is used to provide a yearly bonus, 50% of one month's salary, to all the school teachers of Kanegusuku-son. The 'son' feels that the salaries paid by the central government are too low and uses this tax as a means of supplementing them.

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The following work schedule was copied from the blackboard in the township offices of Kanegusuku-son in May, 1954. All of the listed activities are those which must be handled in addition to the regular work load. Virtually all of the scheduled meetings required the presence of the mayor (sonchō); a number of these were held outside of his district (son). At the present time American work schedules are followed. Saturday afternoon and Sunday are regarded as holidays for the office staff, though oftentimes the mayor and department heads may work on those days if there is pressing business.

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Schedule of Activities for Kanegusuku-son Office
for May 1954

May
1st -
2nd - Sunday
3rd - Industrial Conference at Ryukyu-American Cultural Center, Naha.
4th - Welfare Week, May 4th through 10th.
5th - 'Kochōkai'. Meeting of all village mayors at 2 p.m.
6th -
7th -
8th -
9th - Sunday
10th - Meeting of all mayors of municipalities at Okinawa Kaikan, Naha, 10 a.m. Proclamation of law for welfare of children at Sekai Theater, Naha, 2 p.m.
11th -
12th - Injections for pigs for prevention of infectious diseases.
13th - Meeting of Assembly Chairmen's Association of Southern Okinawa at Agricultural Cooperative Club.
Injections for pigs.
14th - Industrial inspection of Southern Okinawa.
Injections for pigs.

One of his major responsibilities to the township office is tax collection within the village; yet, his actual powers are slight, as nearly all of his official acts are first sanctioned by the villagers or the township office. It seemed to the author that the chief role of the 'kuchō' was as an intermediary between the people and the township office or as an agent for the latter, rather than as an administrator. It would seem that the payment of his salary by the township instead of by the village is symbolic of his actual role. 622 [651] [632]

Assisting the 'kuchō' are several officers the first of which is the assistant mayor ('fuku-kuchō') who is elected at the same time as the mayor and serves for one year. He is paid ¥480 ($4.00) per month, and like the mayor he must be over 27 and a household head. In the absence of the mayor he functions in his place, and on all other occasions he assists him in his work. A village clerk ('shōki') is also elected at the same time as the 'kuchō', and serves for a term of one year; he is paid a salary of ¥700 ($5.83) each month. The main qualifications for this position are that one have a fair amount of education and a good mastery of characters for writing. The job holds little appeal since it demands much of the individual's time and affords little in the way of prestige or pay. In Kanegusuku-ku in December of 1953 three elections were held in an effort to fill this position before someone finally and quite reluctantly accepted it. 624 [465] [465]

An advisory body of four councillors ('hyōgiin') assists the mayor in his administration; they represent each of the four neighborhoods or districts of the village. They are elected at the same time as the mayor, serve for one year, and receive a salary of ¥20 (17¢) per meeting. According to the villagers this body has replaced the earlier yuushi which was an unelected advisory council made up of former village officials, the village equivalent of elder statesmen. The 'kuchō' never undertakes an independent course of action; he first consults the 'hyōgiin' and obtains their approval and suggestions before initiating action. 623 [465]

Each village of Kanegusuku-son elects two men to represent it in the township ('son') assembly ('sonkai'); they are elected for a term of four years. Older, mature men who have held several official positions are always selected. They also play a part in village administration and are considered village officials. At all meetings they sit with the officials, and their opinion is much valued. 624 632

All matters of real importance are submitted to the household heads who form the real body politic within the village. The electorate for the village consists exclusively of household heads; to vote in a village election one must be a household head or one appointed by him to vote in his place, but in township and national elections universal suffrage obtains. At one village election which the author witnessed in December of 1953 balloting began as soon as the meeting was called to order without any preliminary speeches or nominations. It was later stated that the election and likely candidates had been informally discussed among the village leaders and household heads so that there was no need for preliminaries. The same situation seemed to prevail when meetings were held to discuss matters of general concern; the apparent unanimity of opinion and agreement indicated that informal concordance had been reached well in advance of formal discussion and decision. 621 592 666

to the modern'son'), was the land-holding unit. The administration of the majiri supervised the distribution of land to the villages or mura (political unit equivalent to present-day 'ku') where it was divided among the various families. The amount of land allocated to a given family was dependent on its size, age and sex of members, and social position; consequently the houses of the nuru priestess and local officials received a proportionately larger allotment than the houses of ordinary farmers. The distribution of arable land under this system at the end of the nineteenth century was as follows: 67.1% farmers, 13% local lords, 8.3% nuru priestesses and local officials, 10.9% newly-cleared land.[1] The farmers worked the lands of all groups. 175 423 [632]

The origin of this communal land allotment system ('jiwari seidō') lies deep in Okinawa's past far beyond the beginning of its recorded history. Redistributions were made periodically to compensate for changes in household size and fertility of holdings. These reallotments occurred at from four to thirty year intervals at the option of the local (majiri) administration, with the average being about every tenth year. Certain lands were excluded from redistribution, particularly the lands of the local lords. Usually the lands of the so-called yādui settlements made up of the younger sons of gentry families were also excluded. Newly-cleared land was placed in a special category in order to encourage land development; ordinarily it was treated as the private property of the family that cleared it and was not subject to reallotment. Despite these exceptions nearly 75% of the arable land was subject to periodic redistribution.

Under this system the tax-bearing unit was the majiri, not the family. Each majiri was headed by a jiturei, an appointed official from Shuri, who functioned as an administrator, judge, and policeman; he was held responsible for the tax payment of his district and was subject to recall and punishment in the event of default. The state took no action against the family or household which failed to pay its tax; such matters were left to the jiturei and his assistants, who were free to deprive the offending family of all its lands if they saw fit. When a house defaulted, its lineage was held accountable and forced to make up the deficit; if the lineage was unable to meet its obligations, the entire village (mura) had to assume the responsibility. A marked feature of the old village was a number of granaries set aside for the community's annual tax levy. 175 423 651 632 [672] [613] [621]

Land valuations were permanently fixed in 1610 when the daimyo of Satsuma had the region surveyed to determine the amount of tribute which could be extracted. There was no reassessment until after the annexation, although the overall tax levy was raised in 1635 and again in 1722. Only arable land was subject to taxation; no taxes were levied against house lots which were privately owned, nor against the forest and grass lands which were communal property. The tax levy for each majiri was based on the estimated productivity of its land at the time of the survey; it was a fixed tax and was never altered. It had been set so that in theory 40% of the yearly crop went to the government and 60% was to be retained by the 175 423 651

[1] Higa, 1950, p. 64.

family, but in actual practice the family often received a far lower percentage, since with a fixed tax there was no possibility of compensating for crop failure, decline in productivity, and population growth. Tax payments were made in grain though cloth was also accepted. In addition to the inflexibility of the tax system there was a lack of uniformity in tax levies; certain areas such as Kunigami and the outer islands bore an unequal tax load, and farmers in all areas paid a proportionately higher tax than the officials and upper classes. These inequalities inherent in the system plus the periodic redistribution of plots served to curb any interest which the farmer might have had in improving his holdings; consequently, productivity was said to be very low.

Vestiges of this system may still be found in some of the peripheral areas of Okinawa. The village of Oku in northern Kunigami-son still has communal ownership of its forest lands, and on Kudaka Shima off Chinen Peninsula a villager must turn his land over to the community when he goes to live elsewhere.

2. Okinawa-ken (1879-1945). Japanese Administration and the Termination of the Land Allotment System

Following the annexation of Okinawa, the new government embarked on a program designed to integrate Okinawa (and the southern Ryukyus) into the national state. The task facing the early administrators was a difficult one, for in addition to differences in language and culture Okinawa was poor in natural resources and possessed an antiquated administrative system. It was soon realized that modernization could not be accomplished overnight; therefore the Japanese allowed virtually all of the old customs to be retained during the first twenty years of their administration, and efforts were directed toward educating a sufficient number of Okinawans to assist them in carrying out the program. Though the old class system was abolished, members of the former classes continued to subsist on pensions now paid by the new government, and in the rural areas life continued much as before except that the *mura* replaced the *majiri* as the land-holding and disbursing unit. By 1899 the government was prepared to introduce more radical changes, and in March of that year Law 59 relating to land adjustment was promulgated. Its objectives were to confirm private ownership and to determine land values for tax purposes. The importance which the administration attached to this measure was clearly stated by Nakahara Shigeru, superintendent of the Land Adjustment Board, "Now, the only way to reform the administration is to destroy old customs, but its accomplishment must be commenced with the reform of the system of land taxation, the very foundation of the old customs."[1] Following a mapping survey which began in 1899, officials went into the villages to explain the purposes of the law and to settle conflicting claims. Private ownership was generally confirmed in favor of the cultivator. By 1903 the land reform was carried through to a successful completion.

Private ownership of land was accompanied by the introduction of Japanese laws of property and inheritance; their combined effect was to alter substantially the prevailing social organization and economic balance of the rural community. Land formerly held by the family under the communal

[1] Summary of the Land Adjustment in the Okinawa Prefecture, 1904, p. ii.

allotment system was now entered in the newly-created land registries as the property of the household head. In the past inheritance of the position of household head by the first son had been largely a matter of status succession involving leadership of the family and certain ceremonial obligations. Property succession had not been an important factor, for the private property of the family had usually amounted to no more than the family house and lot. Under the old land allotment system there was always land available for younger sons who set up independent houses, but under Japanese law the bulk of the family property was inherited by the first son. What had been the function of the community in the past now became the responsibility of the family, and since family holdings were usually small, the younger sons were often landless. Informants stated that a father will usually do everything possible to provide his younger sons with land, but he cannot do this if it means jeopardizing the resources of the house. Continuation of the family line for the purpose of continuity in worshipping the ancestors is the chief responsibility incumbent on the household head, and in the rural areas the land provides the major support for the house. With the rise in [166] population there developed an increasing trend for younger sons to emigrate from the rural areas in search of land or jobs elsewhere. The end result [602] was a considerable weakening of family and especially kin group ties and a [621] rapid decline in the communal character of the rural villages.

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Though the creation of private property made possible the sale, purchase, and rental of land, landlordism never gained a foothold on Okinawa. Undoubtedly this is primarily due to the recency of private property and the lack of time for large accumulations of land to be made. It is also in part due to a lack of capital in the rural areas; most capital on Okinawa after the annexation and before World War II was confined to the hands of Japanese businessmen and members of the former upper classes who seemed disinclined to invest in land. Likewise the official Japanese attitude toward Okinawa was to regard it as a rather backward part of Japan not to be exploited as a colonial dependency as in the case of Formosa and Korea. Glacken has suggested that the heavy fragmentation of the typical Okinawan farm would be an obstacle to its sale; yet, the Chinese farmland is also highly fragmented and landlordism has been common there for centuries.[1]

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After the abolition of the communal allotment system taxes were extended to cover all categories of land whereas previously they had been applied only to arable land; however, government income from land taxes sharply declined, as the moderate levies of the Japanese administration were considerably below those of the Okinawan monarchy. Despite this reduction in tax load there has been a steady decline in the amount of land cultivated since the termination of the old land system; this is clearly shown in Tables III and IV in Chapter III, Agricultural History, Land Use and Diet.

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3. World War II and the American Occupation

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During World War II Okinawa became the scene of one of the most violent battles of modern times. The entire island was turned into a combat

[1] Glacken, 1951, p. 160.

to take registration seriously until conditions are more stable. The Central Land Office in Naha appears to be almost wholly out of touch with local changes; for example, the extensive land changes subsequently described for Kitazato did not appear to be known or recorded on the maps in that office. 423 647

Taxation of farm lands is a very complex matter. Land assessments are made by the district land office in conjunction with village leaders; consequently, there is not only some variation in grading from 'son' to 'son' but also from village to village within the same 'son'. All land is divided into six categories: 1) rice lands or irrigated fields, 2) farm land or dry fields, 3) grass land or meadow (often erroneously translated as wasteland), 4) forest, 5) house or building land, and 6) miscellaneous, including graves, ponds, etc. It will be noted that only the first two categories are food-producing. The first five categories are sub-divided into grades depending on a variety of factors such as fertility, accessibility, availability of water, etc. In Kami Motobu-son there are sixteen grades of land within the five graded categories; thus, there are five grades of rice land, five grades of dry field, two grades of grass land, two grades of forest land, and two grades of house land. The tax is computed by the tax rate per grade of category times the area in 'tsubo' (1224 'tsubo' equal one acre). In Kami Motobu-son grade one dry fields carry an annual tax of 15 'sen' per tsubo; therefore, at current exchange rates (¥120 equal $1.00) a house would pay a tax of $1.53 (¥183.60) for an acre of this grade one land. 651 • 423

In regard to the matter of property inheritance there is some dissatisfaction with the present laws on the part of educated Okinawans. They feel that the new Japanese constitution adopted during the American Occupation should also be enacted for the Ryukyus. The constitutional reform which took place in Japan after the war did not apply to the Ryukyus; consequently, Okinawa still operates under the old Japanese civil code except for certain gross inequities which have been corrected by military government proclamation. The new Japanese law holds that all children, regardless of sex or birth order, are entitled to an equal share of the parents' estate. In contrast, the old law, which still obtains on Okinawa, grants the bulk of the estate to the first-born son. Under this law property in reality is held for the family by the first son or household head; it is not his to dispose of as he sees fit. Educated Okinawans who discussed this subject with the author expressed the opinion that the old law was undemocratic in giving emphasis to the family over the individual, and they felt that Okinawa should keep pace with Japan in this respect. It should be emphasized, however, that these persons were not farmers; the latter, most of whom are not too well educated, tend to regard the present laws as just, since the emphasis is on preserving the continuity of the family. A further subdivision of the typical Okinawan farm into still more fragmented plots would do little to improve the prosperity of the rural areas. 428 829 [642] [423] 428 829 184

Statistics show (see chapter on Agricultural History) that since the termination of the communal land holding system in 1903, there has been a steady decrease in the amount of land cultivated on Okinawa. That this has continued unabated at the same time that the population has rapidly increased seems a paradox. Most certainly improvements in crop yields through research development have not been sufficient to offset this. Nor has the tax burden been excessive or crushing; in fact, quite the contrary is true since the Japanese substantially reduced land taxes when they abolished the communal system. What is more, the shortage of food has for many years necessitated importation of a considerable portion of the food consumed, and in view of the limited job opportunities in pre-war Okinawa, it seems unlikely that this means of livelihood would be overlooked. It would seem that the major reasons for this decline are cultural and historical. 178 241 [311]

It will be recalled that the farmer in the Okinawan kingdom lived in a state of serfdom; class differences were in effect those of caste. When freed from the restrictions by the Japanese, many were likely eager to depart from the farm village. The status of the farmer traditionally has been quite low on Okinawa. People dislike farming, and those who do farm state quite frankly that they are farmers only because they know nothing else, being poorly educated or possessed of little ability. No young men were heard to express a desire to become farmers, and no father wishes this occupation for his son. Pitts and the author noted in studying the household registries for their respective villages that not infrequently the first son has left the farm to seek employment elsewhere, quite contrary to usual Japanese practice. Farming is not a goal for the Okinawan youth today, and at the University of the Ryukyus the quotas for admission to agricultural studies were barely filled in 1954 whereas some of the other departments had three and four times as many applicants as openings. Centuries of a communal land ownership system left the farmer with no feeling of attachment toward his soil such as exists among the Chinese peasantry. Land was frequently reapportioned, and no plots were retained long enough by a given cultivator to give him a feeling of proprietorship. It is said that few ever tried to improve their holdings, as they felt these would soon be allotted to another. 178 241 554 [566]

The nature of taxation under the communal land system together with slowly rising population also made necessary a greater exploitation of land resources than is necessary today. The old tax rate was fixed and was set at a ratio of 40%. If the government had set 100 koku per year as the expected yield for a given village, then the government demanded 40 koku from that village each year. This may perhaps have been satisfactory to the villagers at the time of assessment, but as the population slowly rose there were more mouths to feed out of the villagers' 60 koku portion, and there was no respite from the tax demands in time of crop failure. Consequently, there was increasing pressure to bring more and more land under cultivation; undoubtedly, inferior, low-yield, idle soils were made into farm land. After the peasant was freed from this system and the trend toward sugar production began, foods were imported from outside, and the slow contraction of arable land figures began. 178 241 651 311

The average Japanese farm of 2 1/2 acres and the average Chinese farm of over 4 acres contrast strongly with the Okinawan average (and most are 241 433